PUBLIC OPINION

IN SENEGAL
ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations Department of Public Information commissioned a public opinion poll in Senegal to assess the awareness, knowledge and image of the UN. The poll was conducted during February and March 1992.

THE RESULTS IN BRIEF

- More than half of Senegalese have heard of the United Nations.
- About one-third of those surveyed said the UN is doing a good job. The reason most often stated was its role in the Gulf crisis.
- One out of five Senegalese can identify the current Secretary-General.
- Radio, television and word of mouth are the three main sources of information from which the Senegalese learn about the UN.

AWARENESS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

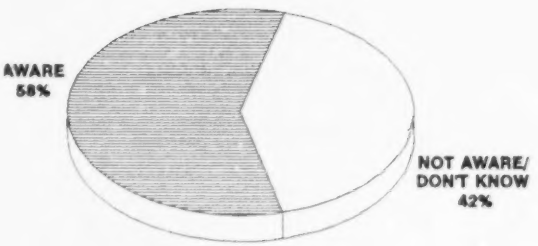

FIGURE 1

AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE UN

Fifty-eight per cent of Senegalese have heard of the UN. Awareness levels were highest among the urban residents, the formally educated, the trained/service workers, the higher income groups and the French speaking.

Of those surveyed, 32 per cent could name at least one United Nations agency, body or institution - UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO and FAO were those most often mentioned. Knowledge is strongly related to the level of education. Among university students, 99 per cent could name at least one UN institution; among those with a secondary education, 85 per cent, and among those with a primary education, 51 per

UNITED NATIONS ISSUE NO. 20 - SEPTEMBER 1992

ABILITY TO NAME A UN INSTITUTION

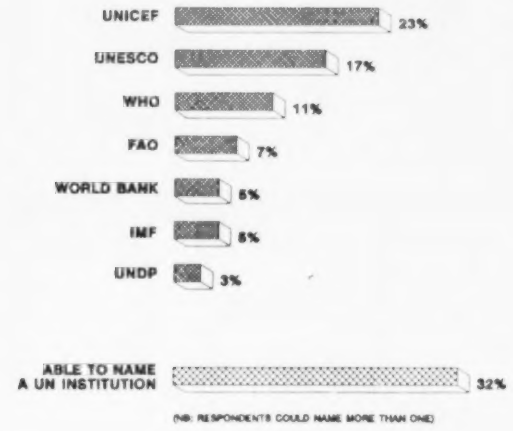

FIGURE 2

IDENTIFYING THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

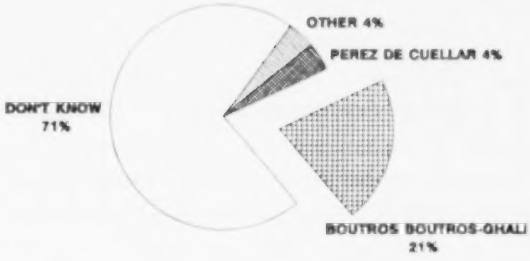

FIGURE 3

cent. Sixteen per cent of the respondents without a formal education could name one UN agency, body or institution.

Teaching about the UN at school appears to increase knowledge. Senegalese who have been taught about the United Nations at school are better able to name various UN agencies, bodies or institutions. About 77 per cent of those who attended school and were taught about the Organization could name at least one, compared to 46 per cent who went to school and had not been taught about the UN. While respondents with a university education seem to be knowledgeable about the United Nations, there is little teaching about the UN at this level. In terms of sources of information, the ability to name one UN institution is highest among those who rely on newspapers (85 per cent), followed by television (68 per cent) and radio (46 per cent).

IDENTIFICATION OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

About one-fifth of those polled identified Boutros Boutros-Ghali as the current UN Secretary-General. Of this number, almost one-half said television was their primary source of information about the UN.

RATING UN PERFORMANCE

Thirty-three per cent of the respondents evaluated the United Nations as doing a good job compared to two per cent who said the UN is doing a poor job. Sixty-five per cent did not rate the Organization's performance.

The most common reason given for positively evaluating the United Nations was its handling of the Gulf crisis. Also mentioned was the UN's role in negotiating and mediating international peace and security, specifically with regards to Angola and other situations of interest to Senegal.

UN PERFORMANCE RATING

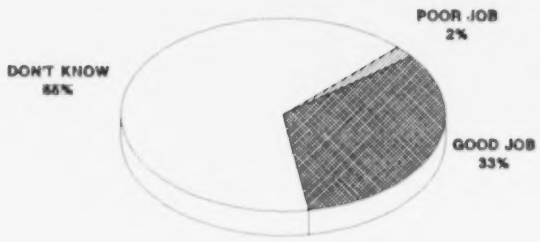

FIGURE 4

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON THE UN

FIGURE 5

Positive evaluation of the UN was higher among urban dwellers, males and Senegalese with a secondary or higher level of education.

Those who evaluated the work of the United Nations negatively, criticized it for what they perceived as the Organization's incapability to resolve the question of Palestine, the Israeli-Arab conflict and the Lebanon problem.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

About one-half of the respondents said radio is their main source of information about the UN. Other leading sources of information cited include television, word of mouth and newspapers.

Just over one-fifth of Senegalese recall being taught about the United Nations at school. Most of the teaching appears to take place at the secondary level. Seven per cent of the respondents said they recall being taught about the UN in school, but they did not remember at what level they were taught.

TEACHING ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS

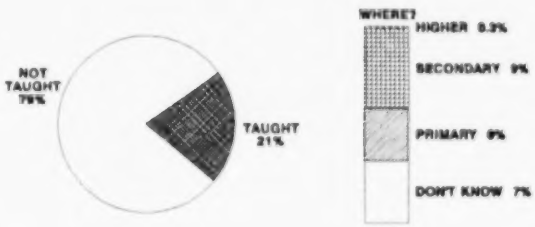

FIGURE 6

INTEREST IN UNITED NATIONS ISSUES

International peace and security, children's issues, world food problems, AIDS and drug abuse were among the five UN issues in which respondents showed most interest. In addition, Senegalese also expressed a strong interest in human rights, racial discrimination, the struggle against apartheid, refugees and disaster relief and African economic recovery. Senegalese are least interested in UN activities related to decolonization, international law and treaties, and the new world information order.

CONCLUSION

The United Nations is known to more than half of the Senegalese population and about one-fifth was able to identify the current Secretary-General although he had been in office for only a few weeks when the poll was conducted. While radio and television are the two major sources from which the Senegalese learn about the UN, word of mouth is another primary source.

Senegalese seem to be very interested in most UN issues - particularly, international peace and security, children's issues, world food problems and AIDS. The overwhelming majority of Senegalese who evaluated the UN performance gave the Organization a postive rating.

For more information, contact the Programme Evaluation and Communications Research Unit, Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York, N.Y. 10017 Phone (212) 963-6872, Fax (212) 963-6601

HOW THE POLL WAS DONE

The poll was conducted by OPENERS, a market research company based in Paris. A sample of 3,648 men and women-15 years and older-was drawn from both urban (11 cities) and rural areas (five regions). The interviews were carried out face-to-face in respondents' homes between 13 February and 10 March 1992. Eighty-five per cent of the interviews were carried out in various African languages (mainly in Woloff), and 15 per cent in French. The margin of sampling error is estimated at ±3 per cent.

The Programme Evaluation and Communications Research Unit of the United Nations Department of Public Information undertakes public opinion polls to "analyse trends of public opinion throughout the world about the activities of the United Nations and the extent to which an informed understanding of the work of the United Nations is being secured." General Assembly resolution 13(1), paragraph 13, Annex 1 of 13 February 1946.

INTEREST IN UNITED NATIONS ISSUES

	VERY INTERESTED %	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED %	NOT INTERESTED %
INT'L PEACE AND SECURITY	85	8	3
CHILDREN'S ISSUES	84	9	2
WORLD FOOD PROBLEMS	83	10	6
AIDS	80	10	6
DRUG ABUSE	80	12	4
HUMAN RIGHTS	77	13	6
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION	72	17	6
REFUGEES & DISASTER RELIEF	72	19	5
THE WORK OF THE UN IN GENERAL	71	14	7
APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA	71	18	7
CRIME PREVENTION	70	19	6
AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY	68	21	6
DISARMAMENT	68	18	9
EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN	65	15	15
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	64	23	9
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	61	23	11
TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT	58	28	9
IMPROVING HOUSING CONDITIONS	58	25	12
POPULATION ISSUES	53	31	11
INT'L DEBT CRISIS	50	30	16
DECOLONIZATION	43	27	22
INT'L LAW & TREATIES	43	28	21
NEW WORLD INFORMATION ORDER	37	22	22

(NB: SOME RESPONDENTS INDICATED "DON'T KNOW" OR GAVE NO ANSWER TO SOME OF THE ISSUES)

FIGURE 7

DPI/1282 - SEPTEMBER 1992

UNITED NATIONS